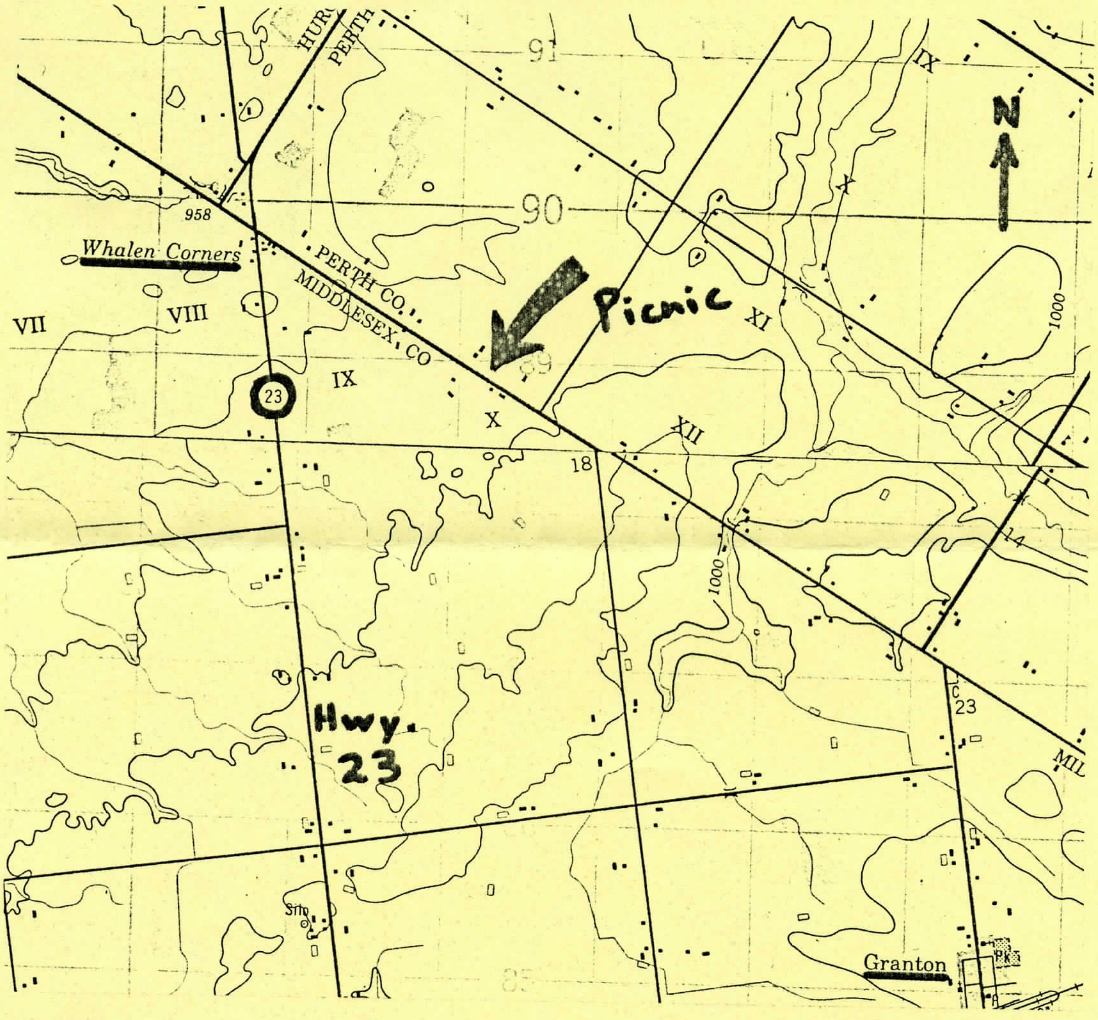
ISSN 0228-4111

kewa

NEWSLETTER OF THE LONDON CHAPTER, ONTARIO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
MAY, 1981 81-5

MEETING NOTICE

Saturday, June 13 is our annual Chapter picnic. This year Bob and Debbie Pihl will host the event at their home near Granton (see map below), starting at 2:00 P.M. Some of the scheduled events include pottery firing, flint knapping and an atlatl dart throwing contest (first prize will be a recently manufactured engraved slate pendant!). Bring your favorite dish, beverage and lawn chair for the pot luck supper. Ribs will be provided. Come on out and enjoy a day in the country!



The Pihl residence is situated one mile east of Whalen Corners, on the north side of the road.

EXECUTIVE REPORT

Heavy work connected with the Calvert site rescue project caused several executive members to miss the April 29 meeting (they fell asleep); however, Rob and Jim were able to discuss details concerning the Chapter picnic, our May monthly meeting and a possible Chapter research project. In connection with the latter, Jim Keron has applied for a license to test excavate the late prehistoric Harrietsville site this August and September. Anyone wishing to spend a weekend or two on the project should contact Jim at 285-2379 after 6:00 P.M.

CHAPTER NEWS

As announced in our May meeting notice, Mr. Rudy Fecteau of the Royal Ontario Museum presented a talk on May 14 entitled the *Archaeobotany of Southern Ontario - New Discoveries*. It was well received, as evidenced by the lengthy question period following his presentation. We all gained an appreciation of the variety of ways in which plants were utilized by Native peoples, as well as the explosion of information provided by recent archaeological projects in Ontario.

Stay tuned for announcements concerning Chapter summer day trips.

CALVERT RESCUE PROJECT

From late April throughout May, a portion of the Calvert site near Dorchester was excavated just prior to its destruction. The fact that subdivision construction had begun on this Glen Meyer village was brought to the Ministry's attention by Jim Keron, our President and a member of the Archaeological Conservation Programme. Through the cooperation of Mr. Keith Davidson, the developer, and the assistance of numerous dedicated volunteers, a vast quantity of data concerning the lifestyle of these early village inhabitants was rescued prior to housing construction. Abundant evidence of corn was found on this well organized community dating to c.850-900 A.D.

WINDERMERE RESCUE PROJECT

May was an active month for excavation, as the Museum of Indian Archaeology also undertook a rescue project, this time in north London. A late prehistoric Neutral longhouse and associated middens situated within a proposed subdivision were successfully rescue excavated by Bob Pearce and his crew.

The following article describes a chert tool which was probably utilized as a knife by Ontario Iroquoian groups and others in the Northeast, but which, due to its form, has been assigned a pre-Iroquoian provenience by researchers from time to time.

THE FOLIATE BIFACE

WILLIAM A. FOX

While the frequency of larger bifaces decreases from Middle to Late Woodland times, such bifaces do continue in use during the latter period, presumably functioning primarily as knives (as usual, we are faced with a dearth of wear analysis). Ovate forms are characteristic of Princess Point assemblages (Stothers, 1977:63), while ovate, triangular (Wright, 1966:34) and stemmed varieties occur on Glen Meyer and Pickering (Kenyon, 1968 and Wright, 1969) sites. Ovate forms continue into Middleport times (Busby, 1979 and Wintemberg, 1948); however, it is not until c.1400 A.D. that bipointed (foliate) bifaces make an appaearance.

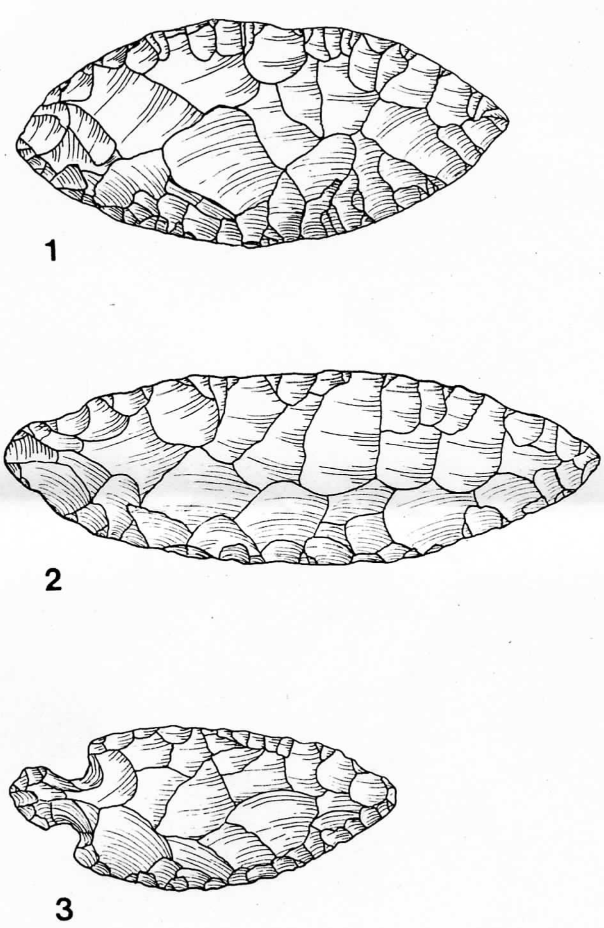


Figure 1: Foliate Biface Form

1 Perry Site, 2/3 Clearville Site (All specimens of Onondaga chert and natural size).

Figure 1 describes the range of variation in form of these often skillfully flaked bifaces. Average blade thickness is 8 mm (n-24), and, as can be seen, there is a notched variant. The perceived diminution in size of Ontario Iroquoian lithic tool kits, plus the size and form of the foliate bifaces has led some researchers to assign these tools a pre Iroquoian provenience (Wagner, 1975).

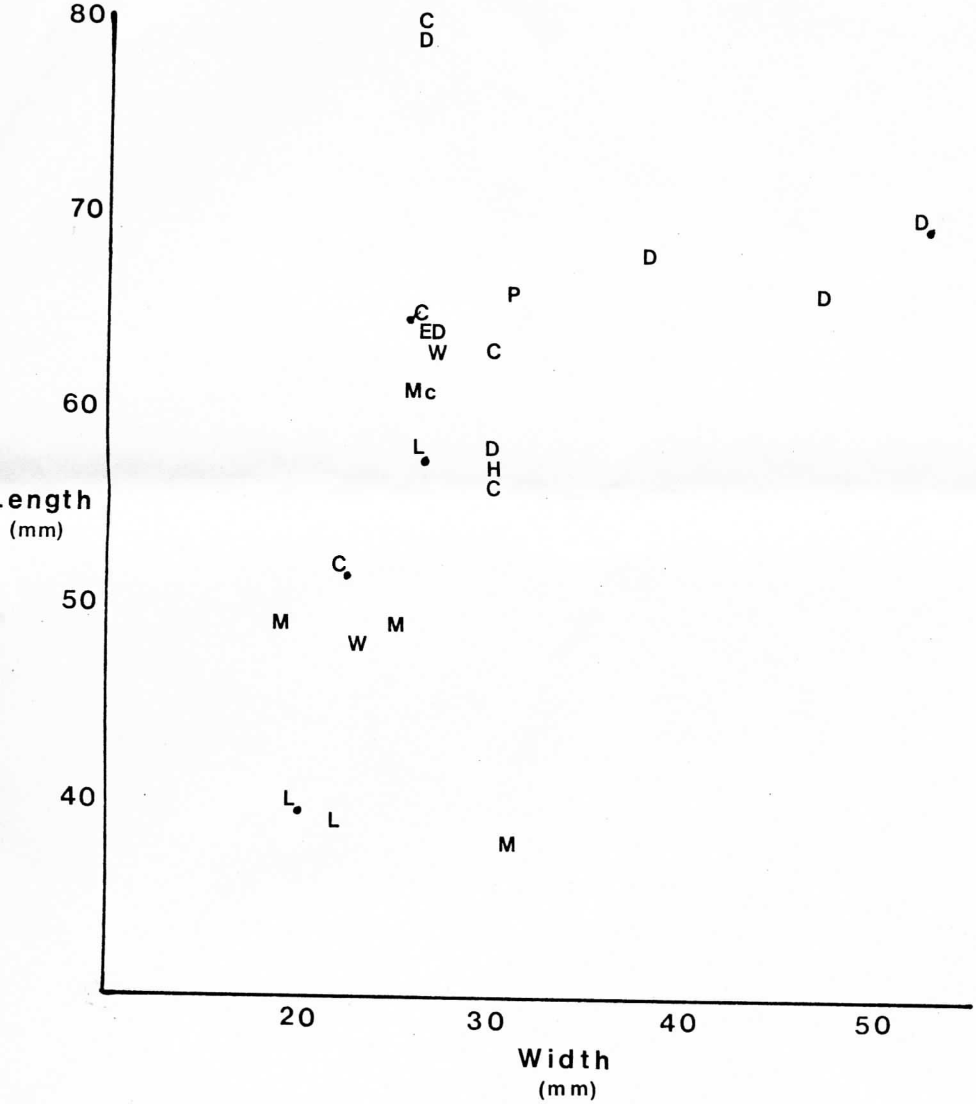
Figure 2 illustrates size and shape for a sample of foliate bifaces from nine Ontario sites dating from c.1400-1650 A.D. Those symbols displaying a dot represent notched specimens. Notched foliate bifaces occur primarily on western Neutral villages (with the exception of three specimens from the Draper site) dating between c.1500 and 1550 A.D. Edge serration has been noted on unnotched foliate bifaces from the Wolf Creek village (c.1550 A.D.) in Chatham and the Elija Ball village (c. 1625 A.D.) in St. Catharines. While the foliate biface is never an abundant tool in Ontario Iroquoian assemblages, it does appear most commonly on sixteenth century sites. Seventeenth century examples are extremely rare and do not always display the "classic" bipoint leaf shaped form.

The majority of foliate bifaces were manufactured of Onondaga chert; however, two Lawson specimens are of Kettle Point chert, the MacMurchy biface is of Collingwood chert and two of the non-Iroquoian Weiser specimens were manufactured from Bayport chert. This strongly suggests that foliate bifaces were often manufactured by the local village inhabitants.

Low power (40x) microscopic inspection of bifaces from the Clearville and Draper villages brought to light heavy transverse edge striations and oblique striations on the face of an unnotched Clearville specimen. Similar edge wear on notched and un-notched foliate bifaces from the Draper village suggests that while these tools were probably used for cutting, they may also have been manipulated in a scraping motion, in much the same manner as one would use a straight razor. Edge re-sharpening flaking patterns on the more heavily re-worked narrow foliates suggests that many of these bifaces were hafted, as does the notching of some specimens.

Elsewhere in the Northeast, foliate bifaces are reported for the same time period in the Garoga Phase of eastern New York (Ritchie, 1965:319), on Whittlesey sites in north central Ohio and as far west as the Moccasin Bluff site in southwestern Michigan (Bettarel and Smith, 1973:120). Bettarel and Smith further note that foliate bifaces are reported from Upper Mississippian villages in the Midwest.

Only detailed technological and functional analysis can tell us if the widespread foliate biface represents a single tool form; however, even if this proves to be the case, chronological placement of those sites producing foliates is not sufficiently refined at present to suggest a center of origin for this tool form. All we do know is that Ontario Iroquoian chert knappers shared the foliate biface concept with a variety of Iroquoian and Algonkian-speaking groups during the late prehistoric to historic periods.



igure 2: Foliate Biface Size and Shape

P	Perry
L	Lawson
D	Draper
C	Clearville
W	Weiser
M	McGeachy
Mc	MacMurchy
E	Elija Ball
H	Hood

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer would like to thank Dr. William Finlayson, Mr. Charles Garrad, Dr. Dean Knight, Professor Leonard Kroon and Mr. Stan Wortner for allowing access to their artifact collections for the purposes of this study.